

26 APR 1972

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-0160
STATINTL1969 STUDY SHOWS
WAR POLICY SPLITJoint Chiefs Urged Renewed
Bombing but Other Units
Doubted Effectiveness

By TAD SZULC

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 25 — Ellsworth Bunker, United States Ambassador in Saigon, predicted in a White House study on Vietnam policy at the outset of the Nixon Administration that North Vietnam's military prospects were so bleak that Hanoi would "make significant concessions" at the Paris peace negotiations.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff, in the same study, unsuccessfully urged the President to resume at once the bombing campaign against the southern part of North Vietnam, which had been halted late in 1968 by the Johnson Administration.

The full text of the study, known as National Security Study Memorandum No. 1 and classified "secret," was obtained by The New York Times today. Its disclosure came as the North Vietnamese were pressing a large-scale offensive in South Vietnam and after the President had ordered a renewed bombing effort against North Vietnam.

In the study, which was compiled early in 1969, the Joint Chiefs said they believed that a determined and immediate resumption of the bombing "would assure almost total interdiction of truck and water-borne movement of supplies into the demilitarized zone and Laos." They contended that the bombing had been effective.

But most of the other Government agencies contributing to the study warned Mr. Nixon that the record of strategic and tactical bombing in Indochina over previous years showed that an air strategy had failed to achieve conclusive results.

Excerpts from the full study, pertaining to the effectiveness of the earlier bombing of North Vietnam, were made public this morning by Senator Mike Gravel, Democrat, after the opening of today's Senate session.

The Republican leadership, however, blocked an attempt by Senator Gravel to place 50 pages of the secret study in the Congressional Record. Mr. Gravel said these documents demonstrated that President Nixon "is today pursuing a reckless, futile, and immoral policy which he knows will not work, but which is intended solely to enable him to save face."

The recommendations and conclusions by military, intelligence and foreign affairs agencies and bureaus of the Government contained in the study were in response to 28 questions submitted to them Jan. 21, 1969, the day after President Nixon's inauguration, by Henry A. Kissinger, the White House adviser for national security.

Mr. Nixon had asked Mr. Kissinger for the study, ranging from the effects of the bombing to Hanoi's motives in agreeing to the Paris peace negotiations the previous year. The detailed responses, received within 10 days, became the basis for National Security Study Memorandum No. 1.

Summary Published

A summary of the memorandum relating the agreements and disagreements within the Administration, was published this morning in The Washington Post. Details of the study were also published in this week's issue of Newsweek magazine.

The full text emphasized the depth and the extent of the discussion among the agencies. One such disclosure was that the Joint Chiefs made a strong plea for new bombings in the face of criticism of the earlier air operations by the Central Intelligence Agency, the State Department and the civilian office of the Secretary of Defense.

The text of the study also showed the following:

There was general agreement among the Government agencies on the gradual improvement in the South Vietnamese armed forces. They concurred that Saigon's troops probably could cope with an offensive mounted by Vietcong forces, but not if they were substantially reinforced by North Vietnamese army troops.

There was general agreement that it was not out of "weakness" that Hanoi agreed to negotiate with the United States in Paris. The State Department emphasized Soviet efforts to facilitate the negotiations, which began in May, 1968, and said that "the Russians can use leverage upon the North Vietnamese to make the negotiations more effective and carefully timed."

fashion."

The C.I.A. cited the differences in estimates of total enemy strength between itself and the Defense intelligence agency, on the one hand, and the Commander in Chief, Pacific, Adm. John F. McCain Jr., and the United States command in Saigon on the other. The C.I.A. warned that these differences "may become of major political importance if developments in Paris should lead to an agreement on the phased withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops, which intelligence might be required to confirm or monitor."

The United States Embassy in Saigon, in a report signed by Ambassador Bunker, predicted that "once Hanoi is convinced that the new Administration is not going to 'quit' in Vietnam or give the game away for free" at the Paris talks, "we would expect renewal of 'serious' talks."

The embassy report said that, while North Vietnam would try to obtain the best conditions, "we think the prospects on the ground are bleak enough for them so that they will, in the end, make significant concessions (in terms of their own withdrawal) to get us out."

The National Security Study Memorandum No. 1, which consists of 548 pages, was the first of nearly 150 studies that have been conducted during the Nixon Administration under the direction of Mr. Kissinger. Each of the huge memorandums has examined the implications of a major foreign-policy question, such as the relations of the United States with the Communist Market, or with the white regimes of Southern Africa.

Accord and Discord

Although all the memorandums are classified as secret, the nature of the first study, as an exhaustive review of the Vietnam situation, has been previously published.

The summary section of the Vietnam-policy study, reportedly drafted by Mr. Kissinger, said that the responses "show agreement on some matters as well as very substantial differences of opinion within the U.S. Government," including "sharpest differences" in interpreting available data.

The summary said that the disagreements "are reflected in two schools in the Government with generally consistent membership."

The first school, it said, usually includes the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam; Commanders in Chief of the Pacific and the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Embassy in Saigon, "and takes a

hopeful view of current and future prospects in Vietnam."

The second school, it added usually includes the office of the Secretary of Defense, the C.I.A. and, to a lesser extent, the State Department and "is decidedly more skeptical about the present and pessimistic about the future."

On the question of bombing effectiveness over the Laos infiltration trails and North Vietnam, the summary said that the United States command in Saigon and the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the one hand and the State Department, the C.I.A. and the office of the Secretary of Defense on the other, "fundamentally disagree over whether our bombing campaign either prior to or after November (1968) has reduced the enemy's throughput of supplies so that the enemy in South Vietnam receives less than he needs there."

It said that the Saigon command and the chiefs "feel the bombing has succeeded, while

the State Department, the C.I.A. and the Secretary of Defense's office "think it has failed."

The office of the Secretary of Defense is a term used to describe Melvin R. Laird, the Secretary, and his personal staff. The study thus suggested a conflict between Secretary Laird and the uniformed Joint Chiefs of Staff.

While the systematic bombing of North Vietnam was halted in November, 1968, under the "understanding" that led to the new phase of the Paris peace talks, United States aircraft, including B-52 bombers, continued raiding the Laos infiltration trails.

This is why critics of the current bombing of North Vietnam, related to Hanoi's new offensive, believe that the conclusions reached by a majority of the Government agencies in 1969 remain timely.

The State Department, replying to Senator Gravel's remarks, rejected today any attempts to equate the pre-1969 bombings with the present situation.

The department's spokesman, Charles W. Bray 3d, said that "the analysis of the effect of bombings covers a situation at a different time and different circumstances."

"What the North Vietnamese Army has now faced us with," he said, "is something quite different from what was essentially a small-scale and guerrilla warfare. In adopting much

STATINT

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R000300170010-3